

Presentation Madrid – December 10th 2013 – Child sex tourism

Good morning everybody. As the program says, my name is Lennert Branderhorst, policy advisor for the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice and for the next ten minutes I am going to tell you a bit about our brand new multi-year, multi-angle plan of action on combating child sex tourism. Since giving presentations for such a large and esteemed audience is not something I do everyday, this is certainly out of my comfort zone, so bear with me.

Since 2009 the Dutch government started with taking concrete action against child sex tourism. We initiated a hotline, held a first campaign in 2010 and a second in 2012 at airports to inform travelers about this phenomena, initiated cooperation in 2010 with travelindustry and became a member of the Virtual Global Taskforce begin this year. But the Dutch government decided that this wasn't enough. We take it as a fundamental assumption that all children must be protected from sexual violence. This includes children who live, or who are staying, in other countries. This concern is magnified when Dutch nationals are involved.

This year, the government intensified the battle against child sex tourism and has involved multiple partners, both public and private. We strive to give the same level of protection to children from Dutch sexual abusers. Both outside and inside the Netherlands. In our new plan of action we strive to do so with three different approaches: prevention, Investigation and prosecution and cooperation. From each approach I will give a couple of examples on what we have implemented the last couples of months or will implement in the foreseeable future. If you want to read about all the action lines, I have a paper and a digital copy of the plan available.

Prevention

Of course the best case scenario is that we prevent children from being abused. One way to do that is to **screen Dutch volunteers within children's aid agencies through an International Certificate of Conduct**. The Netherlands encourages NGOs, aid agencies, charitable institutions, schools and orphanages in other countries to require a Certificates of Conduct for their Dutch employees and volunteers in child sex tourism destination countries.

Another preventive barrier is the **long-term supervision of sex offenders**. This law, that will most likely go into effect in 2014, will make it possible to place convicted child sex abusers under long-term supervision in the Netherlands, if necessary for the rest of their lives, and to make them subject to certain orders, such as a travel ban or a restraining order.

A third step to prevent child sex tourism is the **refusal to issue and revocation of passports**. As and when necessary we can add a convicted pedophile considered at high risk of reoffending in the Passport Alert List. If an individual's name is on the Passport Alert List, his/her passport can be refused or revoked. One hole should be noted here. First, the inclusion of a person's name in the Passport Alert List will not suffice in all situations, since Dutch nationals are free to travel within the EU carrying an identity card, and an identity card cannot be refused or revoked. The refusal or

revocation of a passport is only useful in combination with other supervisory measures like I just mentioned. Efforts are being made to identify other effective ways of monitoring compliance with restrictions on the liberty of convicted pedophiles, preventing them from leaving the country.

Investigation and prosecution

If the abuse already happened, the focus shifts from prevention to repression. A way to improve this reactive phase is **improving availability of and access to information** by the police and the Public Prosecution. There are currently efforts underway to enhance information gathering from third parties such as NGO's and members of the public regarding alleged child sex tourists and improve the way this information is used.

An example where we try to strengthen our information position is the **annual awareness campaign against child sex tourism on national airports**. Through the use of flyers, handed out by the Royal Military and Border Police, we seek to create awareness among tourists that fly to know locations of child sex tourism. By this means we hope to enhance the number of reports and the quality of these reports. As we speak, this years campaign is underway on several Dutch airports. In the foreseeable future we hope to link to link up with the European campaign against child sex tourism, under the slogan 'Don't look away'.

Another important improvement to our investigation and prosecution is increase of **Liaisons Officer (LO)** in other parts of the world. Next to the already active liaison officers, three additional liaison officers, solely tasked with combating child sex tourism, will be posted there where they are needed most. The major task of this tree LO's is to develop a regional approach for the combat of child sex tourism. For instance, we are planning to send a Liaison Officer to Brazil where the Fifa World Cup will take place in 2014. A world cup that we will win this time, but that is besides the point.

Cooperation

Given the transnational nature of child sex tourism and the numerous government agencies and NGOs involved in tackling it, effective cooperation between these parties is essential. This is our third approach, cooperation.

In the first half of 2013, the police and Public Prosecution Service explored the scope for **cooperation with NGOs**, charting existing legal barriers. This exploratory study is set to culminate in a concrete pilot project in this final quarter of 2013. The results of the pilot project will be used in defining the parameters for exploring similar forms of cooperation to tackle child sex tourism in other countries.

And In its efforts to combat sexual violence against children, the Netherlands cooperates **closely with other countries**. Cooperation through bilateral treaties between the Netherlands and various other countries is predicated on a knowledge of, and confidence in, each other's legal systems. In the near future, the Netherlands will be setting up talks with Thailand to chart the problems and needs on both sides for cooperation in criminal matters. The subject of child sex tourism will be

explicitly included in these talks. Based on the conclusions arising from these consultations, it will be decided what kind of cooperation with Thailand is possible and desirable. The experience gained with Thailand can serve as an example for exploring cooperation in tackling criminal cases involving child sex tourism with other countries.

To both remain abreast of international trends, new instruments and possible approaches, and to highlight the Dutch approach in the international field, there will be **active participation in diverse expert meetings and meetings convened by and with relevant international partners**. Like this conference. These meetings and partners are highly diverse and provide us and you, with knowledge, best practices, skills and operational cooperation. Membership of the Virtual Global Taskforce provides additional scope for strategic cooperation with diverse international partners to devise an innovative approach to combating child pornography and child sex tourism.

Example

A small example of how these action lines, these barriers work in practice can be demonstrated by the a Dutch case that happened a while ago. In 2004 a Dutch individual who was a sailing instructor, let's call him Simon, was convicted in the Netherlands for the long term abuse of a boy. Quickly after he was he was released he was arrest and convicted once more. But old habits apparently die hard 'cause this person soon afterwards started a new sailing school for children. After this news came to light, the person went into hiding and wasn't heard from until 2010 when we found out that he founded an orphanage in Cambodia. There, in 2011, he was arrested for the alleged abuse of 5 children between the ages 7 and 13. Due to limited evidence and the fact that the judicial system works somewhat different in that part of the world, Simon was acquitted of all charges in 2012. Terre des Hommes suspects that the parents of the victims where pressured or bribed, but that is not something we can proof.

If the measures where in place that we are working on now, we could have placed him under long-term supervision and, if necessary, we could have revoked his passport to prevent him from traveling to Cambodia. If he would have tried to work as a volunteer through a Dutch organization, he wouldn't have got the International Certificate of Conduct. And if these preventive measures would have failed, the improved information position of the Dutch police, the additional Liaison Officers and a closer cooperation with NGO's could have added to a better investigation and prosecution of this individual in Cambodia.

This, what I've just told you, is just a short summery of what we have done in the last couple of months and what we are planning to do in the comming years. Hopefully this has inspired you a bit and if you have questions or suggestions, please, feel free to discuss them with me during the good practice curcuit.

Thank you for your attention.